

SOME ASPECTS OF IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE AMERICAN RACE.

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A CRISIS has been reached in the immigration policy of the United States. The Great War, from which we have tried so hard to keep aloof, has not only completely altered the present conditions of immigration to our country, but will, after the war, for generations to come, profoundly affect the character of very large numbers of our alien immigrants, and, through them and their offspring, the character of the future American race. I have been asked to prepare, for the *EUGENICS REVIEW*, a paper embodying my views on the probable effects of the war on immigration to my country, and on the eugenic aspects of this problem as they present themselves to my mind. The subject naturally arranges itself under these three heads: (1) the present status, and (2) the probable future character and volume of immigration; (3) the existing immigration laws of the United States, and the changes in them which our experience of their workings has shown to be necessary, especially in view of the new situations which will arise as the result of the war.

(1) THE PRESENT STATUS OF IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES.—From a total annual immigration during the last few years of nearly a million and a half, and an annual net increase in alien population¹ of about 800,000, the incoming aliens during the year ending June 30th, 1915, fell to 434,000, with an outflow of 384,000, leaving an increase of population of only 50,000.²

In July, August and September, 1915, there was a net *decrease* in our foreign-born population of a little over 5,000, the number who left in that period exceeding the number who arrived by that amount. The war has thus brought us,

¹ Deducting the numbers of those who returned to their own countries.

² For the sake of simplicity, I give these statistics in round numbers.

suddenly and unexpectedly, face to face with a great experiment in restriction—an experiment of a far more drastic sort than has been suggested by any but the most radical “restrictionists.” Furthermore, the war has brought, temporarily, an interesting, and to many of us a welcome, change in the racial character of our immigrants. The majority of those coming in 1914-15 have been from northern and western Europe, whereas, under normal conditions, nearly three-quarters of our immigration is from southern and eastern Europe. England, Holland, Denmark, and the Scandinavian countries, from which there is a fairly regular steamship service, have been sending us about their usual quota. Of those aliens who have returned home for military duty, the majority have been from southern and eastern Europe. Those of us who have had much to do with our recent immigrants, and who realise what great undigested, unassimilated lumps in our body politic millions of these aliens are, and must long remain, cannot but welcome this temporary breathing-space, when a week may bring us 3,000 immigrants instead of a day bringing us 5,000, as has often happened in the past. We observe, with satisfaction, that there is little unemployment, even in our great eastern cities, and we realise, what we have always maintained, that reducing the inflow of unskilled labour must simplify and lighten all our burdens of public and private charity. We observe also that there is no lack of labour in any of our great industries, and herein again the predictions of those who have advocated some reasonable measure of immigration restriction have been verified. The “liberal immigrationists” always maintain that any curtailment of the numbers of alien immigrants is sure to lead to a widespread labour shortage. Such is not the case, at any rate not at the time of writing.

(2) THE PROBABLE FUTURE CHARACTER AND VOLUME OF IMMIGRATION.—No one who has at heart the future of the American race can fail to view with concern the probable effects of the war upon the mental and physical conditions of our immigration. For the United States, the war will have a far-reaching racial significance which few persons realise to-day. There will inevitably result a widespread demoralisation among the

peoples now engaged in conflict; a moral degeneration arising from life in the army, from the breaking up and destruction of family ties and responsibilities; from the restlessness and unwillingness to settle down after the fighting is over; from the craving for freedom and liberty when military discipline is relaxed. These disturbed, restless, often irresponsible millions, will surely contribute very largely to our future immigration. They will bring to us a body of men with a lessened regard for law and order; less disposed to adapt themselves to our conditions of life; with everything to gain and nothing to lose by a change of residence—an immigration whose coming may well make us pause and consider very seriously the magnitude of the problem of control and of assimilation which will here be presented to us. Another aspect of the question concerns the serious interruption of education, in the case of millions of the youths of Europe. Many, probably the majority, of those who survive the war will never return to school, or university, but will go forth into the industrial world, insufficiently, unsatisfactorily prepared for the business of life. Thus, for years to come, immigration to the United States is certain to include large numbers of youths, and of men, whose standards of education will be lower than would have been the case had there been no war.

On the physical side we may see the *immediate* effects of the war upon the present generation of men and women who will come to America, and the *more remote* effects, upon future generations, upon the children who will be born in Europe and the children who will be born in America of persons now living in the war countries. The introduction of the pestilential war diseases, such as cholera and typhus is not greatly to be feared, although some of our far-seeing medical men are already rightly viewing this problem with grave concern. On the other hand, however, the more subtle and less easily detected venereal diseases, which are always rampant in great armies in war time, and the mental breakdowns, of which there are so many thousands of cases among the soldiers at the front, present another aspect of the health problem which is far more serious. Great numbers of soldiers, although not actually afflicted with

any specific disease, will eventually come to the United States crippled, wounded, enfeebled, or mentally unstable. The fittest, physically and mentally, those who in the past have had the initiative and the courage to emigrate, will be dead, or will be needed at home to carry on the work of the rebuilding and of the reorganisation of industry. The least fit are most likely to leave their homes. Many of those who, because of physical or mental disability will find themselves unable to earn a living at home, will be likely to be "assisted" by relatives and friends in the United States to "come to America." There is reason, then, for expecting with reasonable certainty, that our immigration in the next few decades after the war will be of a lower mental, physical and moral standard than it has been in the past.

And what of the more distant future? For our answer to this question we naturally turn to Dr. David Starr Jordan's latest book, "War and the Breed: The Relation of War to the Downfall of Nations." War, as Dr. Jordan strikingly puts it, "impoverishes the breed." The strongest and best men are the ones who are killed or injured; and who leave few or no children. The weaklings live, marry and continue the race. The result is an inevitable impoverishment of the stock. Dr. Jordan notes the reduction in the required height of French soldiers as the result of the Napoleonic wars and the killing off and wounding of the taller men. The French and German babies of 1870-71, who came to be mustered as soldiers twenty years later, were found to be an inferior lot of men. And, more recently, as noted by Dr. Jordan in *Science* (New York), a similar condition has occurred in Japan. The Japanese children born at the time of the war between China and Japan, twenty years ago, became conscripts in 1915. According to the *Asahi* of Tokyo, as translated in the *Japan Chronicle*, the number of conscripts in Tokyo decreased over 16 per cent. For Japan, as a whole, there was an increase of conscripts in 1915, but the rate of increase was only 30 to 50 per cent. of the normal. Furthermore, a lowering in the quality of the new soldiers is distinctly observable. The *Asahi* says that "most of those who underwent conscript examinations this year were born during

the war, and, therefore, are sons of those too old or too weak to go to the front, and so it is no surprising thing if the conscripts of 1915 are of exceptionally delicate constitution." This "impoverishment of the breed" is an inevitable result of war. The longer the conflict continues, the more serious will be the effects upon future generations. The weakling fathers—too young, too old, or too feeble to fight—and the improperly nourished, overworked and harassed mothers of Europe are handing on to their children who are now being born an inheritance of physical and mental unfitness which will mark not only this generation but future generations stretching down the long vista of the time to come. An increase in the number of defective children, now and hereafter, is a condition which Europe must face, and which, because it will affect the character of our immigrants, vitally concerns the United States. Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, of the Smithsonian Institution, one of our leading anthropologists, contributes to Dr Jordan's book an opinion as to the probable effects of heavy artillery firing on the nervous systems of soldiers in the war. He believes that subjection to the constant roar of the firing will "result in a more or less defective mental or nervous state in the progeny of such individuals" . . . "All such conditions will leave lasting marks on the organism. They will produce a large class of invalids, and these invalids, at best, will not be able to give the proper care to their progeny; but in most cases they will, doubtless, not be able to transmit to their progeny a 'healthy mind and a healthy body.'"

From the foregoing considerations, which do not seem to me exaggerated or unduly pessimistic, it may be seen that the effect of the Great War upon the United States, unless all signs fail, is going to be profound and far-reaching. For it will fundamentally affect the mental and physical characteristics of millions of our future immigrants and of their children. The question naturally arises: Is immigration to the United States likely to increase or decrease after the war? If there is a considerable decrease the evils which have been mentioned are obviously less likely to be serious. If there is an increase, our problem will necessarily become one of the utmost gravity.

There will be many conditions making for a greatly increased emigration from Europe and Asia, and some which will tend to cause a decrease. The breaking up of homes and of family ties; the widespread demoralisation of industry; the roving restlessness of millions of men; the desire to fly as far as possible from the horrors of war; the greatly increased burdens of taxation; the interruption of education; the inevitable political and religious readjustments; the widespread destitution, misery, and hopelessness; the desire of people already in the United States to bring to America their relatives and friends who are still left abroad, and the prepayment of the passages of the latter by their more fortunate brethren in the new land; the return to the United States of aliens who went home to fight and who will bring many new immigrants with them when they come back; these, and other causes, will operate to produce a flood of immigration which is likely to surpass anything that we have ever known. This is not merely idle speculation. Our statistics show that recent wars have in no case been followed by any permanent decrease in emigration from the countries involved, but, on the contrary, have usually resulted in a large and almost immediate increase. Following the Franco-Prussian war, immigration from Germany and France increased, and reached its maximum not many years after the war. Greek immigration increased steadily after the last Turco-Grecian war. English immigration increased after the Boer war. The more recent Balkan war was followed by increased immigration from the Balkan States. The numbers from Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Greece in the year after the war were nearly double those of the year preceding the war.

On the other hand there will be tendencies which may operate to curtail emigration from certain European countries. There will, inevitably, be an immense amount of constructive work to be done everywhere, in the rebuilding of roads and railways, of factories and dwellings, and in the general repairing and renewal of what the war will have wasted and destroyed. Skilled labour especially, but also much unskilled labour, will be needed for these enterprises. And wages may rise, owing to the depletion of the ranks of the most efficient

workers by death, or by physical or mental incapacity. Again, it is probable that some of the European governments will take steps to discourage, to check—perhaps even to prohibit—emigration. Great Britain is doing this now (November, 1915) in requiring passports in the cases of young men of military ages who are seeking to fly to America. Balancing these reasons for a decrease against those for an increase, and recalling the lesson taught us by other wars in recent years, there can be little doubt that the balance of probability is very strongly on the side of a marked and overwhelming increase. The work of reconstruction abroad will go on most actively and most effectively where industry is already thoroughly organised; where the governments will have carefully planned programmes for the rehabilitation of the state. This will be the case in the warring countries of northern and western Europe, in Great Britain, France, Germany, and, perhaps, in unhappy Belgium. It is in these countries that there will be the most immediate and best paid opportunities for the largest numbers of skilled and also unskilled labourers. And it is, therefore, from these same countries, from which we have received our all-round “best” immigrants in the past, that we are likely to receive the smaller contribution. On the other hand, in the countries of southern and eastern Europe, from which immigration to the United States has been on the whole less desirable, because of the differences in race, political institutions, education, and social habits, there will not be the same organised reconstructive work, the same wisely planned and far-reaching programme of rehabilitation. From these countries, therefore, so largely in the more primitive condition of agriculture, the forces tending to promote emigration will be operative to a larger extent than in the countries of northern and western Europe. Thus the great preponderance of southern and eastern Europeans, already the most striking feature in the immigration of recent years, is likely to be increased after the war is over. In my judgment, then, the centripetal tendency, to keep people in Europe after the war, will be greatest among the nations which have given us—in the more distant past, as well as in more recent years—the best that we have of Anglo-Saxon stock;

while the centrifugal tendency will be strongest in the countries of southern and eastern Europe and of western Asia. The net result, all things considered, is certain to be a large increase in the total volume of our immigration. There can be no question that the most skilled and the most fit, physically and mentally, will be the ones whom Europe will do her utmost to keep at home. These are the labourers whom we most desire. The unfit, the unskilled, the maimed and the wounded, the mentally defective—these will be the least desired at home; these will be a burden on the state; against the emigration of these European governments are unlikely to set up any barriers; these are the ones who will find it most difficult to secure employment and whose coming to the United States will be the most inevitable.¹

(3) THE EXISTING IMMIGRATION LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES, AND THE NEEDED CHANGES IN THEM.—A policy of national eugenics, for the United States as for every other nation, means the prevention of the breeding of the unfit native. But for us it means far more than that. For us it means, in addition, the prevention of the immigration of the unfit alien. And of these two problems, *the second is by far the easiest to solve*. We have an opportunity which is unique in history for the practice of eugenic principles, immediately, and on a vastly greater scale than is possible in the case of any other nation. By selecting our immigrants, through proper legislation, we can pick out the best specimens of each race to be our own fellow-citizens and to be the parents of our future citizens. We constantly speak of the need of more “hands” to do our labour. We forget that we are importing, not “hands” alone, but bodies also. The vast majority of incoming alien immigrants are potential fathers and mothers, and the character of the race that is to be born depends upon the kind of alien bodies which we are allowing to have landed on our shores day

¹ After the foregoing portion of this discussion was drafted, my attention was called to an article entitled, “Immigration after the War,” by Hon. F. C. Howe, the present Commissioner of Immigration at the Port of New York, in *Scribner's Magazine* for November, 1915. With most of Mr. Howe's views I find myself in substantial agreement, but I wholly disagree with him in his view that our present immigration laws are adequate to meet the immigration problem which we shall have to face after the war.

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by day. It is just at this point that there is the contact between immigration as an economic problem and immigration as a racial problem, a contact which few of us are fully aware of.

Our laws at present aim to exclude some twenty-one classes of mentally, physically, morally and economically undesirable aliens. On paper, the list of the excluded classes is long and formidable, and seems sufficient to safeguard the future race. But careful and unprejudiced students of immigration agree that we have not been keeping out the unfit sufficiently to preserve the mental and physical *status quo* of our population, to say nothing of promoting improvement. The Committee on Immigration of the Eugenics Section of the American Breeders' Association, in its last Annual Report, summed up the situation as follows: "Not only (1) are the immigration laws inadequate to effect the exclusion of the unfit, but (2) the inspection is not as thorough as it ought to be, owing to inadequate facilities, an insufficient number of inspectors, and the frequent arrival of very large numbers of aliens at one time, and (3) in some cases the law has actually been violated, both in the spirit and in the letter." The experience of years has brought certain defects to light. Competent officials have pointed them out. Disinterested citizens, and economists, and medical men, and social workers, have studied our laws, and have shown us where they fail to accomplish their purposes. There is need of more excluded classes, and there is need of better administrative machinery.

From the eugenic point of view, we shall all agree with former Commissioner Williams when he says that there is no phase of the sifting of immigration "quite as important as that which concerns the detection of idiocy, insanity, imbecility and feeble-mindedness." In the group of the (1) mentally unfit whom we have, by the Act of February 20th, 1907, excluded, are the following: (a) Idiots; (b) imbeciles; (c) feeble-minded persons; (d) insane persons; (e) persons who have been insane within five years previously; (f) persons who have had one or more attacks of insanity at any time previously; (g) persons certified by the examining surgeon as being otherwise mentally defective in such a way that their ability to earn a living is affected. Under the law, also, in order to save the hardships

of deportation so far as possible, a fine of \$100 is imposed upon the steamship company in case any idiot, imbecile, or feeble-minded person is brought to this country whose condition might have been detected by a competent medical examination before embarkation. *There is no fine for bringing any insane alien.* Our situation as regards the exclusion of mentally defective aliens is this: In spite of our existing laws, large numbers of insane and mentally defective aliens obtain entrance to the United States every year, to the burdening of the public treasury, and to the detriment of the public health and of the eugenic future of our race. The prevalence of insanity and mental defectiveness already constitutes a very serious national problem, taxing the resources of the States to provide adequately for those in institutions, and involving grave dangers in the case of those remaining in the communities. But the admission of insane and mentally defective aliens greatly increases the difficulty of dealing with this serious problem, and renders ineffective those measures of prevention which are being inaugurated in many of our States. The burden upon the taxpayers is bad enough. But by far the most serious aspect of this whole question is the fact that these alien insane and mental defectives, except in the relatively few cases where they are segregated for life, or at least during their reproductive period, are breeding, becoming the progenitors of hundreds and thousands of human beings, many of whom are absolutely certain to be criminals, or insane, or feeble-minded. In New York State, not less than 30 per cent. of the feeble-minded in the population are traceable to bad alien blood; and over 8,000 insane aliens are being cared for who ought never to have been landed. New York's foreign-born population is less than 30 per cent. of the total, but the foreign-born inmates of the State insane hospitals reach over 40 per cent. and are 65 per cent. in New York City. The New York State Hospital Commission has estimated that the total cost of the aliens now in the hospitals of New York will be approximately \$10,000,000 if these patients live out their expected terms of life.

The alien feeble-minded are even a greater menace to the public health than the alien insane. The latter are to a con-

siderable extent segregated, and thus prevented from breeding, but the former are far oftener at liberty, and are thus usually free to breed as they will. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that feeble-minded persons are very prolific, and also have large numbers of illegitimate children. Commissioner Williams well said in his Annual Report for 1911: "At a time when the subject of feeble-mindedness is becoming more and more important in civilised countries, and the nature and bearings of this taint are being carefully studied by scientists, the Government would seem called upon to make far greater efforts than it does to prevent the landing of feeble-minded immigrants." *The one great undeniable fact is that in spite of our Federal Immigration Law prohibiting the admission of insane and mentally defective aliens, our institutions have been filling up with just these people.* In making this statement we need not enter into any discussion of the question whether our immigrants as a whole, or whether certain classes or nationalities of these immigrants contribute *disproportionately* to our insane and mentally defective groups. We need not maintain that there is any greater tendency to insanity or to feeble-mindedness among our alien population than among our own people. But we do maintain that if we have a more effective exclusion of insane and of mentally defective aliens, the future prevalence of mental diseases and defects in this country must thereby be lessened. There is no denying that fact. It will never help to reduce the numbers of our native defectives if we admit alien defectives. Dr. E. K. Sprague, of the United States Public Health Service, has estimated that we have been admitting about 3,000 mental defectives annually, and an equal number who are or will become insane.

What has been the matter? Why have we been admitting insane, feeble-minded, imbecile and other undeniably undesirable aliens, as the Immigration Commission pointed out, when we have, by law, distinctly excluded them? It was the intention of the present law, by specifying the classes of mental defectives whom we do not want imported into the United States, and by imposing a fine of \$100 upon steamship companies in cases where such aliens are brought here whose condition might have

been detected by a competent medical examination before embarkation, to bring about the exclusion of these persons before they were allowed to sail from their foreign port. This is, obviously, the humane way to deal with such cases. Now the difficulty is that *there is no fine whatever in cases of insane persons who are brought here*, and that the \$100 fine in the case of idiots, imbeciles, etc., is too small to be effective. The steamship companies conduct a wholly inadequate medical examination at the ports of embarkation. They take their chances of having the aliens slip by our medical inspectors, as a great many do. Moreover, the possible loss involved in the payment of a few fines is insignificant in comparison with the vast profits which come from the steerage passenger traffic. The steamship companies claim (naturally!) that it is impossible for them to pick out mentally defective aliens at the ports of embarkation, and that it is unfair for us to expect them to do so. *But we know better.* We know that these same steamship people can, if they will, detect many, and probably most of these cases before sailing, for our own medical examination here shows that many whom we detect "could have been detected by the most casual medical examination on the other side if there had been any real desire on the part of the transportation companies to prevent the importation of such persons into this country." This is the opinion of Dr. George B. Campbell, the expert alienist formerly in charge of the Bureau of Deportation of the New York State Hospital Commission (Annual Report, 1912).

One of the things for us to do is to impose a fine in all cases where an insane alien is brought here whose condition might have been detected at the port of embarkation. This fine should be at least \$200, and the present fine of \$100 in the case of idiots, imbeciles, and feeble-minded persons should be increased to \$200. By imposing a fine for insane cases, and increasing the fine in the other cases, we can force the steamship companies to make a medical examination before embarkation which will be something more than a farce. It would, for some reasons, be desirable for us to make our own medical examination at the ports of embarkation, but international

difficulties have stood in the way of such a plan. The only immediate practicable way is to force the steamship companies to make the examination. Moreover, no examination even by our own surgeons at the ports of embarkation, would be able to detect as many insane and mentally defective aliens as we can detect here, where our facilities for detection and examination, poor as they now are, are inevitably much better than could be provided at a dozen or more foreign ports from which the aliens sail.

Another important step concerns the better inspection of the mental condition of the aliens after they have landed at our immigration stations. The task of sifting out the mentally defective from the great stream of aliens which pours into New York is a tremendously difficult one. It requires time, skilled medical inspectors, and adequate quarters for the examination and the detention of suspicious cases. If the American race is to be kept mentally sound, we must provide by law that a sufficient number of commissioned medical officers of the United States Public Health Service, with special training and experience in the detection of insanity and mental defectiveness, shall be detailed for duty in New York, at all times, and that at least one such medical officer shall be detailed at every other port of entry. Congress should also amend the immigration law so that the medical officers engaged in the examination of immigrants shall be provided at all times with the necessary facilities for the detention and examination of those immigrants, including the exclusive services of interpreters. It is a false and absolutely indefensible economy which refuses to provide adequate medical inspection for our incoming aliens. *The entire cost of the medical inspection of our immigrants has been less than ten cents a head.* It would cost a good deal more than that to have a veterinary surgeon advise us as to the desirability, for breeding purposes, of a horse or of a dog. Yet we have been giving the fathers and mothers of future American children only ten cents' worth of medical inspection apiece.

Dr. T. W. Salmon, of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, has very clearly summed up the whole situation as

regards the admission of mentally undesirable aliens as follows : " There is no reason for the acceptance of a single insane or mentally undesirable alien except inability to determine his condition. This does not require restriction of immigration, but a sensible selection of individual immigrants, in the interest of our own country and wholly without reference to the interests of foreign countries or of foreign steamship companies." Dr. E. K. Sprague, of the United States Public Health Service, has stated his opinion that " Only about 5 per cent. of the mental defectives are (now) being detected, and about 25 per cent. of the estimated possibility among the insane is being attained."

The law says that an alien who becomes a public charge " from causes existing prior to landing " may be deported within three years from the date of his or her entry. In spite of everything we can do, some insane and mentally defective aliens will always escape the notice of our medical examiners, and will be admitted. Many, probably most, of these become public charges, and their presence in our midst is eugenically highly dangerous. Now it is the conviction of all the unprejudiced experts who have studied this matter that this time limit should be extended to five years. Furthermore, instead of having the burden of proof upon the United States to show that the cause existed prior to landing, the law should be changed so as to put the burden of proof upon the alien to show that the cause arose subsequent to landing. The Government, as Commissioner Williams pointed out, " is usually without means of hearing about his (*i.e.*, the alien's) mental condition abroad, or his heredity, and it may have arrayed against it relatives and friends who are desirous that he remain in the United States—as a burden upon the State, of course, not upon them." The great economic advantages of having the period within which deportation may take place extended to five years is apparent from the figures for New York State, given by Dr. Campbell three years ago. When (under the old law) the period of deportation was *two* years, the maximum number deported from New York State hospitals in one year was 222. Under the three-year period for deportation it was 399. In 1912, if the period had been five years, the

number deported would have been 606. In the year 1912, 571 of the 752 insane aliens who were returned at the expense of the State, or of friends, became public charges *after the three-year period, but within the five-year period* after their entry. If the five-year period had been a matter of law, these 571 could have been deported at the expense of the steamship companies on Federal warrants. Dr. Campbell also points out that a saving of \$40,000 would be effected to the State of New York during the first year of a law establishing a five-year deportation period, "but the chief advantage would be the permanent removal from the country every year of 200 insane persons, most of them in early life, and many of whom might become the parents of defective or mentally unstable children."

In discussing the present situation regarding the admission of "mentally undesirable" aliens I have suggested (1) certain necessary changes in the Immigration Act; and (2) the need of more adequate facilities for the enforcement of the law. The remedies here suggested have been approved by competent and unprejudiced persons who have studied the problem. They were endorsed at a conference, held in New York City, November 15th, 1912, at which the most important scientific bodies in the United States which deal with the treatment and prevention of insanity were represented.¹ Furthermore, most of those recommendations were included in the Report of the United States Immigration Commission, which studied the whole immigration question for over three years.

The addition to our list of excluded classes of "persons afflicted with chronic alcoholism," and of persons who are found to be "mentally inferior or unstable," would make it possible for us to debar a good many highly undesirable immigrants whom we cannot, under the law as it now stands, prevent from landing. Chronic alcoholics are often discovered by the examining surgeons, but the law does not state specifically that they shall be excluded. And many persons not properly certified as "insane," but who would, in many cases become

¹ American Medico-Psychological Association; National Committee for Mental Hygiene; New York Psychiatric Society; New York State Charities Aid Association; Committee of One Hundred on National Health; New York State Hospital Commission; Immigration Committee of the Eugenics Section of the American Breeders' Association.

insane soon after arrival, could be kept out if "mentally inferior or unstable" aliens were excludable.

The group of the "mentally unfit" is, eugenically, the most important single group of the excluded classes. For that reason I have devoted most of my attention to it. Yet the changes in the law which I have suggested would be no less helpful in enabling us to detect and to exclude many other undesirable aliens who are classified under the head of (2) "physically," (3) "morally," and (4) "economically" unfit, and whose exclusion is clearly most essential. In the group of "physically unfit" we have (1) epileptics; (2) tuberculous persons; (3) persons afflicted with a loathsome or dangerous contagious disease; (4) persons certified by the examining surgeon as being otherwise physically defective in such a way that their ability to earn a living is affected. This last is the so-called "poor physique" clause. All of the classes in this group are undesirable. From a eugenic viewpoint the danger from classifiable defectives, great as this is, is probably, on the whole, less than the danger from the much larger class of aliens who are below the mental and physical average of their own countries, and cannot fail to lower the average here. We ought to exclude more aliens of such low vitality and poor physique that they are eugenically undesirable for parenthood. The "poor physique clause" has been found to be far less effective than it was intended to be because (1) it has been taken to be an economic test and not a physical one, and it is difficult for the immigration authorities to establish the fact that the physical or mental defect will make the alien a public charge; because (2) of the provision which makes it possible to admit on bonds aliens who fall into the group here named; and because (3) the present force of medical examiners is wholly inadequate to pick out the aliens who come within the clause. Aliens of such low vitality, poor physique, or suffering from such mental and physical defect that their ability to earn a living is thereby interfered with are, in the majority of cases, undesirable persons. They are not only themselves weaklings and unlikely to resist disease, but they are likely to have defective and degenerate offspring. It is very difficult to suggest any practicable clause,

for insertion in the Act, which would give us the physical test that is so much needed. But the existing evil can be corrected to a large extent by the assignment of more surgeons to the examination of immigrants, and by abandoning the practice of admitting aliens on bonds except in very exceptional cases. The present bonds are *worthless*. They do not protect our communities against the expense of supporting aliens who become public charges after being landed on a bond. And, what is far more serious, *no bond ever prevented any physically or mentally unfit alien from breeding*. When bonds are accepted, in unusually worthy cases, authority should be given to call for surety company bonds.

A recent report of a Committee of Inquiry in New York City estimates that in one year Bellevue Hospital receives somewhat over 1,000 alien patients whose exclusion from the United States is mandatory under existing laws, and that the total number of patients in a year because of disabilities which existed prior to their landing is over 2,200. During our present slack time of immigration, the medical inspection is naturally more effective, and the percentage of defects noted among the arriving aliens has more than doubled. This shows the great importance of a much larger body of medical inspectors to cope with the new situation which will arise when the war is over and the flood of arriving aliens again increases.

The group of "morally unfit" includes (1) prostitutes; (2) procurers or persons attempting to bring in women or girls for immoral purposes; (3) polygamists; (4) anarchists; (5) convicts and self-confessed criminals. All these classes are obviously unfit and undesirable. Most of them are probably mentally defective, and would be discovered by a more adequate medical examination. Yet many of the aliens who belong to this group are among the most difficult to detect, and so far no feasible means have been discovered for making it possible to increase largely the number of the "morally unfit" who are debarred.

The last group, the "economically unfit," includes (1) paupers; (2) persons likely to become a public charge; (3) pro-

fessional beggars; (4) contract labourers; (5) persons deported within a year previously as being contract labourers; (6) assisted immigrants, unless on special inquiry they are found not to belong to any other excluded class; (7) children under 16 years of age, unless accompanied by at least one parent. With this group, *per se*, the eugenicist has little specifically to do, except in so far as a contract labourer, or a child under 16, or a person liable to become a public charge, happens to be physically or mentally undesirable.

This brings up one final point, and that is the attitude which those who are most interested in the health aspects of alien immigration should take in regard to any proposal for a further *restriction* of immigration by means of such very mild requirement as the "reading test," embodied in the Immigration Bill which was vetoed by President Wilson.¹ When a further restriction of immigration is recommended because "demanded by economic, moral and social considerations," by a competent body of experts like the United States Immigration Commission, then it behoves all those who have the best interests of the country at heart to favour such a plan. We ought to remember that any measures which will diminish the volume of immigration must tend to improve its quality, because a decrease in numbers gives more time and better opportunity for inspection. Furthermore, a decrease in numbers, especially of those aliens who are unskilled labourers, and who are the most ignorant, will have a very important and beneficial result in relieving the congestion in our over-crowded cities; in diminishing economic stress, and, therefore, in improving the mental and physical conditions of the aliens who come to us. The more skilled and the more intelligent the alien, the less he tends to crowd into our cities; the less liable he is to become insane or mentally unstable from the strain and stress of the life in our congested city districts. Dr. T. W. Salmon has hit the nail on the head when he says: "More will be accomplished in the exclusion of insane immigrants, and of those destined to become insane a short time after their arrival, by measures which broadly restrict immigra-

¹ The reading test, with its many exceptions in favour of parents, grandparents, all females, minor children, etc., is an extremely mild restrictive measure.

tion than by any measures, however effective, which are directed specifically against insane immigrants, for any measure which will check the flow of immigration in general must necessarily result in the admission of fewer undesirable immigrants." The "cheap labour" element is one which all of us ought to unite in restricting. Those of us who are particularly interested in the eugenic aspects of our immigration problem have every possible reason for joining hands with those who have the economic aspects of it most at heart, in the campaign for the better regulation of alien immigration to our shores.

To our own very heavy burden of the defective and the degenerate we are adding every year, by immigration, thousands of aliens whose presence here will result, because of their own defects and those of their offspring, in lowering the physical, mental and moral standards of the American race. We have much still to learn about heredity. But we know enough to be sure that if the quality of our race is to be preserved there must be a far more careful selection of our immigrants than we have ever attempted to make. The need is, indeed, imperative for applying eugenic principles in much of our legislation. But the greatest, the most logical, the most effective step that we can take is to begin with the proper eugenic selection of the incoming alien millions. We should see to it that we are protected, not merely from the burden of supporting alien defectives, but from that "watering of the Nation's life-blood" which results from their reproducing their kind after admission. As Professor Karl Pearson puts it: "You cannot change the leopard's spots, and you cannot change bad stock to good. You may dilute it, possibly spread it over a wide area, spoiling good stock, but until it ceases to multiply it will not cease to be." Every Senator and every Congressman of the United States should have brought home to him the truth of Lord Beaconsfield's words: "The public health is the foundation on which reposes the happiness of the people and the power of a country. The care of the public health is the first duty of a statesman."

The conservation of our national resources. How much we hear about that in the United States! Conservation of American forests is important. So is conservation of American coal, and

of American oil, and of American natural gas, and of American water supplies, and of American fisheries. But the conservation and improvement of the American race is vastly more important than all other conservation. The real wealth of a nation is the quality of its people. Of what value are endless acres of forests, millions of tons of coal, and billions of gallons of water, if our race is not virile, and sane, and sound?